

## **Wyoming Department of Education Chapter 31. Graduation Requirements**

### **Section 1. Authority.**

(a) These rules and regulations are promulgated pursuant to the Wyoming Education Code of 1969 (as amended - 2002) [W.S. 21-2-304 (a) (i) (ii) (iii) and (iv)].

### **Section 2. Applicability.**

(a) These rules and regulations pertain to the requirements for graduation from any public high school within any school district of this state. It is the intention of the state board of education to prescribe uniform student content and performance standards for the common core of knowledge and the common core of skills specified under W.S. 21-9-101(b) and to establish requirements for earning a high school diploma with which public schools (K-12) must comply.

### **Section 3. Promulgation, Amendment, or Repeal of Rules.**

(a) These rules and any amendments thereof shall become effective as provided by the Wyoming Administrative Procedures Act. (W.S. 16-3-101 through 16-3-115)

### **Section 4. Definitions.**

(a) Advanced Performance. The level of performance as defined in the performance standards level descriptors contained in the sets of uniform student content and performance standards established for the Common Core of Knowledge and Common Core of Skills. [W.S. 21-2-304 (a) (iii) and W.S. 21-9-101 (b) (iii)]

(b) Body of Evidence. A collection of evidence which reflects a student's performance relative to the uniform student content and performance standards. [W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(iv)]

(c) Common Core of Knowledge. Areas of knowledge each student is expected to acquire at levels established by the state board of education. [W.S. 21-9-101 (b)(i)]

(d) Common Core of Skills. Skills each student is expected to demonstrate at levels established by the state board of education. [W.S. 21-9-101 (b)(iii)]. These skills may be integrated into the uniform student content and performance standards for the Common Core of Knowledge.

(e) Compensatory Approach. A compensatory approach for combining information allows higher scores on some measures (or standards) to offset (i.e., compensate for) lower scores on other measures. The most common example of the compensatory approach is the simple average. Within a single common core content area, students can use higher performance on a particular standard, for example, to offset lesser performance on another standard and still be considered proficient in that content area (e.g., mathematics).

(f) **Conjunctive Approach.** A conjunctive approach requires that scores on all measures used must be above the criterion point (cut score) for the student to have met the overall standard. Students must be above the cut score in all common core content areas to meet the graduation requirement.

(g) **Content and Performance Standards.** Standards which include the K-12 content standards, benchmark standards at grades 4, 8, and 11 for science, social studies, health, physical education, foreign language, fine and performing arts, and career/vocational education, and benchmark standards at grades kindergarten through grade 8 and grade 11 for language arts and mathematics, and the performance standards level descriptors established for the Common Core of Knowledge and Common Core of Skills. [W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(iii)]

(h) **Proficient Performance.** The level of performance as defined in the performance standards level descriptors contained in the sets of uniform student content and performance standards established for the Common Core of Knowledge and Common Core of Skills. [W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(iii) and W.S. 21-9-101 (b)(iii)]

(i) **School Years of English/Mathematics/Science/and Social Studies.** With reference to Chapter 31, “school years” is defined as the credit earned during a school year which is synonymous with a Carnegie Unit of study that reflects the instructional time provided in a class calculated by multiplying the number of minutes a district uses for a class by the number of pupil-teacher contact days in the district calendar as approved by the State Board of Education. This instructional time is usually between 125 and 150 hours in a calendar school year.

(j) **Standards for Graduation.** The K-12 content standards contained in the uniform student content and performance standards established for the Common Core of Knowledge and Common Core of Skills. They define what students are expected to know and be able to do by the time they graduate. [W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(iii)].

## **Section 5. Wyoming Statutes.**

(a) All public school districts, and the schools and personnel within those districts, must comply with the applicable statutes of the State of Wyoming.

## **Section 6. Wyoming State Board of Education Policies and Regulations.**

(a) All public school districts, and the schools and personnel within those districts, must comply with applicable state board policies and regulations. (W.S. 21-2304)

## **Section 7. Common Core of Knowledge and Common Core of Skills.**

(a) All public school students shall be proficient in the uniform student content and performance standards at the level set by the state board of education in the following areas of

knowledge and skills, emphasizing reading, writing and mathematics in grades one (1) through eight (8) (W.S. 21-9-101):

Common core of knowledge:

Reading/Language Arts;

Social Studies;

Mathematics;

Science;

Fine Arts and Performing Arts;

Physical Education;

Health and safety;

Humanities;

Career/vocational education;

Foreign cultures and languages;

Applied technology;

Government and civics including state and federal constitutions pursuant to W.S. 21-9-102.

Common core of skills:

Problem solving;

Interpersonal communications;

Keyboarding and computer applications;

Critical thinking;

Creativity;

Life skills, including personal financial management skills.

## **Section 8. Uniform Student Content and Performance Standards.**

(a) Uniform student content and performance standards, including standards for graduation, are hereby incorporated by reference pursuant to W.S. 16-3-103(h) and include the following:

(i) Wyoming Language Arts Content and Performance Standards as approved by the Wyoming State Board of Education on June 8, 1998, amended on July 7, 2003, amended on November 19, 2008, and amended on September 23, 2011;

(ii) Wyoming Mathematics Content and Performance Standards as approved by the Wyoming State Board of Education on June 8, 1998, amended on July 7, 2003, amended on November 19, 2008, and amended on September 23, 2011;

(iii) Wyoming Science Content and Performance Standards as approved by the Wyoming State Board of Education on June 9, 1999, amended on July 7, 2003, and amended on November 19, 2008;

(iv) Wyoming Social Studies Content and Performance Standards as approved by the Wyoming State Board of Education on June 9, 1999, amended on July 7, 2003 and , amended on November 19, 2008;

(v) Wyoming Health Content and Performance Standards as approved by the Wyoming State Board of Education on June 6, 2000, amended on July 7, 2003 , amended on November 19, 2008, and amended on September 23, 2011;

(vi) Wyoming Physical Education Content and Performance Standards as approved by the Wyoming State Board of Education on June 6, 2000, amended on July 7, 2003, and amended on November 19, 2008;

(vii) Wyoming Foreign Language Content and Performance Standards as approved by the Wyoming State Board of Education on June 6, 2000, amended on July 7, 2003, and amended on November 19, 2008;

(viii) Wyoming Career/Vocational Education Content and Performance Standards as approved by the Wyoming State Board of Education on June 6, 2001, amended on July 7, 2003, and amended on November 19, 2008;

(ix) Wyoming Fine and Performing Arts Content and Performance Standards as approved by the Wyoming State Board of Education on June 6, 2001, amended on July 7, 2003, and amended on November 19, 2008.

(b) The above-referenced content and performance standards are available at the Wyoming Department of Education website at [edu.wyoming.gov](http://edu.wyoming.gov), or are available at cost from the Wyoming Department of Education, 2300 Capitol Avenue, Hathaway Building, 2nd Floor, Cheyenne, Wyoming, 82002.

(c) The above-referenced content and performance standards dated July 7, 2003, are the most current editions.

## Section 9. **High School Diploma.**

(a) Requirements for earning a high school diploma from any high school within any school district of this state shall include:

The successful completion of the following components in grades nine (9) through twelve (12), as evidenced by passing grades or by the successful performance on competency-based equivalency examinations:

- (i) Four (4) school years of English;
- (ii) Three (3) school years of mathematics;
- (iii) Three (3) school years of science;

(iv) Three (3) school years of social studies, including history, American government and economic systems and institutions, provided business instructors may instruct classes on economic systems and institutions. [W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(iii)]

(b) Satisfactorily passing an examination on the principles of the constitution of the United States and the state of Wyoming. (W.S. 21-9-102)

(c) Evidence of proficient performance, at a minimum, on the uniform student content and performance standards for the common core of knowledge and skills specified under Section 8 of this chapter. [W.S. 21-2-304(a)(iii) and (iv)] A high school diploma shall provide for one (1) of the following endorsements which shall be stated on the transcript of each student:

(i) Advanced endorsement which requires a student to demonstrate advanced performance in a majority of the areas of the common core of knowledge and skills and proficient performance in the remaining areas of the specified common core of knowledge and skills, which include language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health, physical education, foreign language, fine and performing arts, and career/vocational education, as defined by the uniform student content and performance standards;

(ii) Comprehensive endorsement which requires a student to demonstrate proficient performance in all areas of the common core of knowledge and skills, which include language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health, physical education, foreign language, fine and performing arts, and career/vocational education, as defined by the uniform student content and performance standards;

(iii) General endorsement which requires a student to demonstrate proficient performance in a majority of the areas of the common core of knowledge and skills, which include language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health, physical

education, foreign language, fine and performing arts, and career/vocational education, as defined by the uniform student content and performance standards;

#### Section 10. **Body of Evidence.**

(a) Determination of proficient performance shall be demonstrated through a body of evidence identified by the district and approved by the district board of trustees. [W.S. 21-2-304 (a)(iii) and (iv)]. The body of evidence shall meet the following requirements:

The body of evidence assessment system shall be designed to best meet the needs of individual Wyoming school districts for certifying whether or not students have mastered the common core of knowledge and skills as embedded in the uniform student content and performance standards as specified in Section 8 of this chapter. The body of evidence assessment system shall be designed and evaluated according to the following criteria: alignment, consistency, fairness, standard-setting, and comparability.

(i) The alignment criterion shall be met if the combination of assessments that comprise the system are aligned with district content and performance standards so that the full set of standards, both in terms of content and cognitive complexity are assessed. Multiple assessment measures and formats shall be employed in the system to maximize the alignment between standards and assessments.

(ii) The decision regarding whether or not a student has met the graduation requirements for a given content area must demonstrate a high degree of consistency such that the rates of classifying students into performance categories incorrectly are minimal. The focus of this evaluation should be concentrated on the system and should examine, for example, how different judges would evaluate the same set of data about a group of potential graduates. In order to satisfy this criterion, the district should also document that the results of the assessments are not overly influenced by error due to raters or the specific tasks/items used comprising the assessments. Individual assessments within the system shall be evaluated for consistency, in terms of error due to raters, tasks, administration conditions, and occasions.

(iii) The body of evidence assessment system shall be designed, implemented, and evaluated so that it is not biased against any groups of students. Appropriate accommodations shall be employed so students with disabilities and Limited English Proficient students have as fair a chance as possible to demonstrate what they know. Multiple assessment opportunities and formats shall be used to maximize fairness. The results of the assessments comprising the system and the results of the system itself shall be disaggregated to examine both the fairness of the assessment system and opportunities for all students to learn the standards.

(iv) The method for establishing cut scores between various performance levels on the district's body of evidence assessment system should be based on a research-based methodology and the district shall indicate a clear rationale for choosing their particular method. The method selected shall incorporate clear descriptions of the performance levels and should not be based on arbitrary performance distinctions (e.g., traditional percentages).

(v) The assessments comprising the system shall be comparable across schools and classrooms within the same school district both within a given year and across years.

(b) At a minimum, districts shall use a compensatory approach for combining assessment information at the benchmark and standard level when determining whether students have met the performance requirements for each common core content area.

(c) Districts shall use a conjunctive approach for combining assessment information across common core of knowledge and skills content areas to determine whether students have met the graduation requirements.

(d) A committee of peers shall review each district's body of evidence assessment system. The committee of peers shall recommend to the Superintendent of Public Instruction the district's status regarding its body of evidence assessment system. The committee of peers shall be comprised of Wyoming educators who have successfully completed peer review training conducted by the Wyoming Department of Education. The district shall submit evidence to the committee of peers in accordance with the peer review guidance provided by the Wyoming Department of Education based upon the evaluation criteria identified in Section 10 (a). This evidence shall include the following components: district assessment plans; evidence of alignment among standards, curriculum, and assessments; sample assessments; evidence of consistency, documentation of the standard setting methods, evidence supporting the fairness of the assessment system, documentation supporting the comparability of the assessment system across schools and years, and other documentation that the district chooses to submit to support the technical quality of the body of evidence assessment system.

(e) All Wyoming school districts with a high school shall submit their body of evidence assessment system documentation, as described in Section 10(d) of this chapter to the Wyoming Department of Education according to the following schedule:

(i) Districts shall submit body of evidence documentation by January 1, 2002, for a formative evaluation by the peer review teams and the Wyoming Department of Education. Written feedback regarding the quality of each district's body of evidence assessment system shall be provided, by June 15, 2002, to the district superintendent and board of trustees chairman.

(ii) Districts shall submit body of evidence documentation by January 1, 2003, for evaluation by the peer review teams and the Wyoming Department of Education. The State Board of Education, at the June 2003 meeting, shall incorporate the results of this review into each district's accreditation evaluation.

(iii) For the 2003-2004 school year and all following years, districts shall submit yearly updates to their body of evidence documentation to the Wyoming Department of Education. For the 2004-2005 school year and all following years, this documentation shall include the student performance results relative to the district's body of evidence assessment system including disaggregation of passing rates.

(f) The body of evidence for special needs students shall include accommodations in accordance with their individualized educational programs or 504 plans, and the policies as described in the Policies for the Participation of All Students in District and Statewide Assessment and Accountability Systems, which is available from the Wyoming Department of Education, 2300 Capitol Avenue, Hathaway Building, 2nd Floor, Cheyenne, Wyoming 82002-0050. These accommodations shall not substantially alter the character of the assessments used to measure student performance.

#### **Section 11. Effective Date for Graduation Requirements.**

(a) Beginning with the graduating class of 2003, each student who successfully completes the requirements set forth in Section 9(a) of this chapter will be eligible for a high school diploma. (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(iii) and (iv) and W.S. 21-9-102.) Thereafter, each student who demonstrates proficient performance on the uniform student content and performance standards for the common core of knowledge and skills listed in Section 8 of this chapter as demonstrated by a body of evidence as set forth in Section 10 of this chapter and who also completes the requirements set forth in Section 9 of this chapter will be eligible for a high school diploma in accordance with the following timeline: (W.S. 21-2-304(a)(iii) and (iv) and W.S. 21-9-102.)

(b) Students graduating in 2006 and thereafter shall demonstrate proficient performance on the uniform student content and performance standards for language arts, mathematics, science, social studies, health, physical education, foreign language, career/vocational education and fine and performing arts as set forth in Section 9(c) of this chapter.